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DEPT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG, AF/C  
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

SENSITIVE  
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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: JEM CLASHES WITH SLM/MM IN MUHAJIRIYA, BUT SCALE OF  
FIGHTING IS UNKNOWN

REF A) KHARTOUM 48  
B) KHARTOUM 13

¶1. (SBU) Multiple rebel and UN sources confirmed the fighting between JEM and SLM/Minnawi forces in the Minnawi stronghold of Muhajiriya the morning of January 15 (Ref A), but details remain scarce and the scope of the fighting remains in question. According to UN sources, clashes apparently started when a group of JEM vehicles moved into a Minnawi-held area, possibly with the intent of poaching Minnawi fighters for its own ranks. UNAMID has not yet entered Muhajiriya and was unable to confirm details of the fighting, though one UN source stated that the clashes resulted in only four deaths and had subsided by mid-morning. The fighting was preceded by SAF aerial bombing of rebel positions (apparently JEM) in South Darfur on January 13. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) On January 15 poloff spoke with an officer in UNAMID's Joint Mission Analysis Center (JMAC). He stated that the fighting was triggered by a group of thirteen JEM vehicles led by Minnawi defector Bakhit Karima entering the Muhajiriya area with the intent of recruiting Minnawi fighters into JEM's ranks. Four people were reportedly killed in the clashes, he said. The fighting subsided around 10:15 AM. He noted that UNAMID has yet to enter Muhajiriya to confirm the details.

¶3. (SBU) Poloff also spoke with a UNDSS Security Officer, who stated he heard the clashes commenced when an uneasy truce between SLM/MM and the JEM fighters in Muhajiriya went awry. JEM fighters had moved into the area against the wishes of SLM/Minnawi, but discussions between the two groups were ongoing to allow JEM a safe passage provided that certain conditions were met, he said. One of these conditions was that JEM stay out certain areas, he said. JEM forces failed to meet this condition when they entered village of Khataba, south of Muhajiriya town, to restock on supplies. Upon violation of the agreement, clashes ensued. He had no information as to the scope of the fighting but had no news that it had subsided.

¶4. (SBU) Multiple rebel sources confirmed fighting between JEM and Minnawi troops in the Muhajiriya area. SLA/Unity's Abubakar Kado affirmed that fighting was taking place and that the forces of Bahar Abu Gharda of JEM/Collective Leadership (URF) were fighting alongside Minnawi. Suliman Marjan, a Maidob commander affiliated with Abdul Wahid, also asserted that clashes were taking place between JEM and Minnawi forces. (Note: Marjan had previously told emboff on January 14 that JEM forces were concentrating in the area of Kalajo, approximately 25 km west of Muhajiriya town. He stated that JEM's presence there was creating tensions with Minnawi and threatening the peace there. End Note.)

¶5. (SBU) Marjan also told emboff that seven Maidob former fighters who escaped the JEM encampment in Um Jaras, Chad following clashes

with JEM Zaghawa there had arrived in his area of control after walking for 13 days (Ref B). (Note: Marjan himself is Maidob. End note.) He said the Maidob described Um Jaras as "Guantanamo" because Khalil use to imprison anyone who protested against his orders. They said that twenty senior Maidob commanders were killed by Khalil and that many junior military ranks are still under detention.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: Details of the fighting between JEM and Minnawi have yet to be fully verified on site by UNAMID, and reliable information remains notoriously hard to come by. It is exacerbated by the sometimes circular flow of information amongst the rebels, UN, media and the diplomatic community. Post will report more as additional information becomes available. End comment.

FERNANDEZ